

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
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P R 140620Z APR 78  
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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 3697

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SHUM, PK  
SUBJECT: PROSPECTS FOR A "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" IN PAKISTAN

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 3211 (B) ISLAMABAD 3459

1. SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE MOVEMENT TO ESTABLISH SOME FORM OF "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" IN PAKISTAN, WHAT HAS BECOME A SHORTHAND PHRASE FOR BRINGING POLITICAL ELEMENTS TO THE SIDE OF THE CURRENT MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES TO FACE THE TOUGH DAYS WHICH LIE AHEAD. IT IS BASED ON AN AIRGRAM WHICH WILL BE IN THE NEXT CLASSIFIED POUCH AND WHICH EXAMINES THE ANTICIDENTS OF THE "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" MOVEMENT, THE PROBLEMS IT HAS FACED, AND THE PROSPECTS FOR ITS ESTABLISHMENT AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE MOVEMENT FOR FORMATION OF A "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" IN PAKISTAN IS GATHERING STRENGTH EVEN THOUGH THE CONCEPT REMAINS VAGUE IN ITS PRACTICAL ASPECTS AND UNCERTAIN IN ITS ULTIMATE COMPOSITION. IT SEEMS AS IF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION IS DETERMINED TO BRING POLITICIANS INTO POSITIONS OF SOME RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT AND TO CALL THE

RESULT "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" EVEN IF IT FALLS SHORT OF THE TRULY NATIONAL GOVERNMENT THEY SET OUT ORIGINALLY TO PROMOTE.

3. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE A STRONG EXPRESSION OF OPTIMISM ON THE SUBJECT BY CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR (CMLA) GENERAL ZIA UL-HAQ AND REPORTS IN THE URDU PRESS TO DAY THAT THE CMLA'S OFT-POSTPONED MEETING WITH POLITICAL LEADERS TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSAL WILL TAKE PLACE IN RAWALPINDI ON 15 APRIL, THE DAY BEFORE THE GENERAL SETS OFF ON HIS VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA. THE PRESS SUGGESTS THAT THE POLITICIANS -- AS YET NOT FORMALLY SPECIFIED -- HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE BUT ONLY IF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ARE MET:

- A. MINISTERS WILL BE GIVEN "REAL POWER;"
- B. POLLS WILL BE HELD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE;
- C. A DEFINITE POLLING DATE WILL BE ANNOUNCED;
- D. THOSE FACING ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEEDINGS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE; AND,
- E. RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY WILL BE RELAXED.

4. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY TO US THAT GENERAL ZIA WILL FEEL ABLE TO AGREE TO ALL OF THESE CONDITIONS; HIS ABILITY TO AGREE TO ANY, HOWEVER, WILL AT LEAST LAUNCH THE FORMAL BARGAINING PROCESS AND DETERMINE WHICH AMONG THE PARTIES WILL FIND IT POSSIBLE TO PARTICIPATE. IN ANY EVENT, WE ANTICIPATE AN OPTIMISTIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF "PROGRESS" IN THE QUEST FOR A CONFIDENTIAL

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"NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" BY THE MLA, EVEN IF THE BARGAINING ON TERMS AND PORTFOLIOS DRAGS ON FOR A TIME. WE ESTIMATE THAT THE COMPOSITION WILL BE LIMITED, AMONG MAJOR PARTIES, TO THE PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI, (AND POSSIBLY THE JUI) THAT THE KAUSAR NIAZI-WING OF THE SPLITTING PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY WILL FIND SOME WAY OF SUPPORTING THE MOVEMENT, BUT THAT THE TEHRIQ-E-ISTIQLAL AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY WILL REMAIN ON THE SIDELINES, NOT OPPOSING THE MLA'S EFFORTS BUT UNWILLING TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE MILITARY IN THE ABSENCE OF A CLEAR COMMITMENT TO AN END TO MILITARY RULE.

5. SUCH A GOVERNMENT WILL BE OF SOME HELP TO GENERAL ZIA, HIS GENERALS AND HIS TECHNOCRATS, PROVIDED HE IS PREPARED TO GIVE THE POLITICIANS ENOUGH TO KEEP THEM ON BOARD. SUCH A GOVERNMENT'S COURSE WILL NOT BE EASY, GIVEN THE ANTIPATHIES THAT EXIST ON ALL SIDES, AND IT WILL NOT GIVE HIM WHAT HE CLEARLY WANTED: A UNITED FRONT TO ENABLE HIM TO MOBILIZE THE NATION TO FACE THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS WHICH LIE AHEAD, NOT LEAST OF WHICH WILL BE THE FINAL DECISION ON BHUTTO. BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THE BEST HE CAN GET.

HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

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